WHENEVER I was fortunate enough to sell a short story, before I began to read—and sometimes buy—other people's stories, the most interesting part of the publication process was looking at the illustrations to see how the artist had visualized the characters. That is to say, it was the most interesting phase next to the reception of the cheque. Now and again the figures in the illustrations, to me, were total strangers. More often they

were the very persons I had begotten. Given body by charcoal or oil, by pencil or wash, they stalked in the shape of the moon on a certain night of the month, and a sheaf of letters on the editor's desk. Let his figures depart from the mental portrait conjured by the person who reads the story and his artistic soul is pierced by dark criticism.

AN IMMENSE amount of research and preparation often precedes the sending of the white card upon the illustrator's board. He may have to browse for days in a library, seeking information as to the type of spring coat worn by a gallant of Queen Elizabeth's time. He may interview a score of models before finding one who looks like "Ovulce 'Arry of Limehouse Reach." He must step himself in the author's manuscript until he is saturated with the atmosphere of the story. And he may tear up half a dozen attempts before he is satisfied that his drawings convey that atmosphere.

Arthur Heming, for instance, wanted to illustrate one of his stories with a painting showing several French-Canadian river men in a canoe. He had met in the North country the type he needed, but a quiet Toronto studio hasn't the tang of woods and swiftly flowing streams. Nor can city models be converted into husky river men by the mere donning of costumes. So Heming brought down from the North half a dozen of assorted types, painted them and paid them, and the canvas justified his pains. The posing time alone cost him $84.

STUDY W. V. Chambers' drawing on the second page of Norman Reilly Raine's story, "The Argonauts," in this issue. The man's back is as eloquent as any face could be. One can instantly picture the utter longing of the character for a taste of the romance the ship means to him. And on this page is reproduced Chambers' first rough sketch of the figure.

I was in Chambers' studio when he was finishing the drawing. I remarked that the model must have had a genius for catching the spirit of the author's script. Chambers smiled and nodded in the direction of the neighboring studio of H. Weston Taylor, another of MacLean's best-known illustrators. Said Chambers, "I couldn't seem to find the right model. Then I happened to show the manuscript to Taylor. He saw the character immediately. Right away he dug up an old coat, hat, and umbrella. Here's your Simon," he said. And I sketched him as he stood."

And if you knew the immaculate, spruce H. Weston Taylor, you would agree that the day on which he began to make lines with a pencil was the day the stage lost a good actor.

THEN, just to show that there are many as well as artistic worries in an illustrator's life, take the case of Edward S. Monks, who, writing in a state of great agitation, explains that the reason he can't deliver on schedule the illustrations to accompany one of J. L. Rutledge's yarns is that he has been collared for jury duty. So, if the reader should happen on a story of golf, grassy swards and hot sun in the Christmas Number, the law's to blame.